

Why & How Indian Temples Were Created

Sadhguru explains how a temple is a tool to make the divine more manifestly experience-able.

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Sadhguru explains how a temple is a tool to make the divine more manifestly experience-able. He looks at how one can use this tool appropriately and talks of some of the phenomenal temples that have been built in [the Indian subcontinent](#).

Full Transcript:

Sadhguru: What is a temple? Let's understand this. Generally when we utter the word temple, immediately people are thinking of which religion? Now, if temple belongs to you or me or to a particular group, you cannot call it a temple. Temple is an invitation to the divine. If we can setup a space and the necessary tools, where divine is more manifest – not that it is not there everywhere – it's just that more experiential. Right now, there are sound waves all over. There is sound waves everywhere, you...but you cannot hear it. You need a cellphone to catch the transmission, otherwise you can't catch it.

So we can say 'A temple is a larger cell phone.' You can't talk, just to listen – one way cell phone. Is that okay? I always set it up... set up the temple in such a way that you can't yap. (Laughter) Is that okay or you want to talk? If you want to listen to a dimension beyond, if you want to be receptive to that possibility, we can create a space like that – we can create a device or a tool like that. When I use the word 'Tool', there seems to be a certain sense of lack of reverence in me, but I particularly use the word 'Tool.' When I refer to the Dhyanalinga as a tool, people feel offended, "Sadhguru, don't say that. In our experience, it's everything. Don't call it a tool." I say, "It's a tool" because the word tool means that which works. It is not a piece of art that you can just appreciate. It's a tool because it works.

If I... see, this just one screw in the door, if I ask you to unscrew it with your hands, can you do it? But if I give you a screwdriver, you can do that, isn't it? Similarly, to open the doors of the beyond, there is a tool. With your own hands if you try to unscrew that simple screw in the... in the door, all your ten nails will go but still it'll not come. Yes? You can try with your teeth. (Laughter) You know, people do. When they have no tools, they'll try their hands. If it doesn't work (Gestures), don't you do? You may lose your teeth, still it may not come, but if you had a simple tool, how easily you could do it? So, this is a tool to open the doors to the beyond and I don't think a tool is irreverential nor do I think a tool is insulting. A tool is a tremendous possibility, isn't it? The significant development in human society has happened only when we started making tools, isn't it? No?

Participants: Yes.

Sadhguru: Why is it offensive if I say a temple is a tool? A temple is a tool. There're different ways of using different tools. For this tool, you have to be in a certain mood because this is not a physical tool, you have to approach it in a certain way. So, that certain way may also include a certain level of reverence because that attitude is needed to be able to use that tool. So, it's very important that it is understood and used as a tool – not as a destination, but just as a possibility. A temple is not a destination. A temple is only a doorway. A doorway is not a destination. A doorway is just a doorway – opens up something.

So, what does it take to build a temple? Of course we need some stone and many other material (materials?), but what does it take within a human being to build a temple? Why I am telling you all this is I am trying to discourage you. (Laughter) A temple will not happen unless at least a band of people... at least a handful of people hold it above their own life – not as a part of their life, not as a side thing that they do in their life. Temple building is not a hobby or a profession. (Laughs) You have to see it as something beyond your life, more important than your life. You must understand at least in the East, in India, temples were built so elaborately. Some of the temples took three to four generations

to complete.

For example, the Kailash temple in Ajanta/Ellora in the... in the Ajanta area in Maharashtra. There're many in Tamil Nadu. This temple was carved out of the rock. They did not build it. A huge mountain of a rock, they carved the temple into it – three floors, all carved out. They must have re...removed hundreds of tons of stone, probably thousands of tons of stone because all the empty space that you see in the temple has been carved out and they made three stories. Elaborate, you know, decorations and there are at least about six hundred statues – all carved out. If you make one mistake, you have to rebuild the whole temple. Yes. Because it's not built, it's not something you can take it off and put something. It is carved into the rock. It took one hundred thirty five years – at least four generations of people working to the same plan. Hmm?

You can't do what you are asked to do. It's a big problem in the modern world. (Laughs) Three... three to four generations of people working to the same plan for one hundred and thirty five years to complete the temple and nowhere their names are written – such phenomenal work. Many of them must have started working at fourteen, fifteen years of age and would have... they would have died there, okay doing the work, but nobody's name is written. Architects... Architects' name is not written. The kings who've sponsored the temple, their names are not written. That's a temple, you understand? It's not a place for us to leave a footprint of who we are.

The very beautiful story There was an old man... There was a man. Men get old (Laughter) slowly. He had two sons. Along with these two sons, they all three of them, they worked hard, tamed the land, cleared the forest, became prosperous by growing all these things. Then for the old man, time to die came. When he was going away, he told his so...two sons, "Whatever comes out of this land, both of you should share equally and you must always keep it up. At no point, there should be any dispute between the two of you." They agreed in front of their father and they kept to it. I am saying not dividing the land. Dividing the land has come only in the last four to five generations in India – maybe three to four generations. Before that, there was no such thing as 'This is my land, this is your land.' Only the produce was divided, never the land. In the... conceptually, they could not understand how you could cut land and say 'This is my land, this is your land' because land is land.

So, conceptually it was not there in people's minds that you can actually divide the land. So he said, 'you must divide the produce equally' and they stuck to it. After some time, one of the brothers got married. One, two, three, four, five – five children he had. The other one never got married. So, he was alone but still the crop was shared fifty-fifty because those are the father's words, you can't change it. That's his wish. So, the brother who was married and had five children one day a worm entered into his mind. You know sometimes worms get into your mind? A worm entered his mind and then a thought arose and he thought 'I have a wife and five children, I get fifty percent. My brother is alone by himself and he gets fifty percent. When I grow old, my sons will grow up, five of them. They will claim more land, we will become more prosperous and we will have much more but my brother is alone. When he gets old, he will have only fifty percent of what we have now. This is not fair but he is so proud. If I try to give him little more, he will not take it. If I try to share my produce from the new lands that my sons have broken, he will not take it. Only from the father's land, he will take fifty percent. So what to do?' So in the night, when everybody is asleep, he carries a bag of grain and takes it and puts it into the... his brother's store. So, it... unknowingly he is donating to his brother.

The other brother, who is alone, thought 'My brother has a wife and five children. He needs more. I am just alone, what will I do with all these? But if I try to offer anything, he will not take.' So, he started carrying grains and dropping it into his brother's store. Reverse osmosis was happening and nobody knew. In the night quietly once in a way, this brother puts one bag, that brother puts another bag. This went on. They became old. One day, two old men were carrying sacks of grain in the night and they came and they faced each other. Both of them realized what's been happening, but they looked away and continued their journey, put the sack and went back. Then they died after some time. The townsfolk were wanting to build a temple. They were looking for a site. They went to many places. After looking many, many places...

After much looking, they decided to build the temple where these two brothers met on that night, they looked at each other and suddenly they were so embarrassed of their own generosity. They looked the

other way and continued their job. They thought 'This is the best place to build the temple' because that's what a temple means that looking beyond yourself. If that is not there, there is no temple.

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